

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, EAID, LI, US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO
WASHINGTON

1. USAID'S DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND PROGRAM OFFICE MET WITH MINISTER NEAL AND KEY STAFF MEMBERS OF MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS ON MAY 4 AT NEAL'S REQUEST TO DISCUSS VARIOUS TOPICS PRESIDENT TOLBERT PLANS TO RAISE WITH PRESIDENT NIXON ON AID MATTERS DURING SUBJECT VISIT SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 5. MINISTER NEAL STATED HIS MINISTRY HAD BEGUN PREPARATION OF STAFF PAPERS ON U. S. ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA FOR PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S VISIT TO U. S. HE NOTED THAT GOL WANTED TO AVOID SURPRISES AND POSSIBLE CONFLICTS WITH U. S. AID POLICY REGARDING ANY PROPOSALS FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PRESIDENT TOLBERT MAY WISH TO RAISE WITH PRESIDENT NIXON AND SENIOR STATE AND AID OFFICIALS. MINISTER NEAL STATED THAT LIBERIA CONSIDERED ITS RELATIONS WITH US TO BE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT; THEREFORE, HE WANTED TO MAKE SURE USAID WAS FULLY BRIEFED ON SUBJECTS THAT MIGHT BE RAISED DURING VISIT. IN ADDITION, HE EMPHASIZED THAT THESE PRELIMINARY PLANS HAD NOT BEEN FULLY DISCUSSED BY CABINET. MINISTER NEAL ALSO MENTIONED THAT HE DID NOT WANT PRESIDENT TOLBERT TO GO TO WASHINGTON WITH QUOTE LONG SHOPPING LIST UNQUOTE AS HAD BEEN CASE OF PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATIONS, BUT HIS MINISTRY WANTED PRESIDENT TOLBERT TO FOCUS ON SPECIFIC AND TANGIBLE ITEMS

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THAT MIGHT BE AGREEABLE TO U. S. GOVERNMENT.

2. MINISTER NEAL SUMMARIZED POINTS ON ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE HE EXPECTS PRESIDENT TOLBERT TO RAISE AS FOLLOWS:

A. MONROVIA FREE PORT LOAN-- MINISTER NEAL STATED THAT HE HAD REVIEWED FILES ON THIS LOAN WHEN HE WAS DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL PORT AUTHORITY. AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW, HE BELIEVED IT WAS IN THE INTEREST OF THE GOL TO SEEK CANCELLATION OF THIS LOAN ENTIRELY RATHER THAN TO CONTINUE MAKING REPAYMENTS TO U. S. GOVERNMENT AND RECEIVING CREDIT FOR TOTAL AMOUNT OF REPAYMENTS THROUGH U. S. CULTURAL FOUNDATION'S CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS. MINISTER NEAL FELT IF THE LOAN WAS CANCELLED ENTIRELY, GOL COULD USE FUNDS NOW GOING TOWARD LOAN REPAYMENT TO FINANCE CONSTRUCTION OF 120 RURAL SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENTS IN LIBERIA.

B. JOHN F. KENNEDY MEDICAL CENTER-- OUTREACH PROGRAM.

MINISTER NEAL STATED WHILE HE REALIZED TECHNICAL TEAM HAD NOT COMPLETED ITS RECOMMENDATIONS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF HEALTH OUTREACH PROGRAM, HE BELIEVED SUCH A PROGRAM WOULD PROVE FEASIBLE AND WOULD REPRESENT MAJOR STEP IN UTILIZING JFK MEDICAL CENTER FOR IMPROVING HEALTH OF LIBERIA'S RURAL POPULATION. MINISTER NEAL NOTED THAT HE HAD LEARNED U. S. GOVERNMENT IS PHASING OUT ITS MEDICAL STOCKPILE INCLUDING PACKAGED DISASTER HOSPITALS AND HOSPITAL DISASTER INVENTORIES OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES. MINISTER NEAL STATED GOL IN PROCESS OF REVIEWING ITS REQUIREMENTS FOR NUMBER OF HOSPITALS AND TYPES AND QUANTITIES OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES THAT MIGHT BE USED IN JFK OUTREACH PROGRAM. HE STATED THAT PRESIDENT TOLBERT WOULD ASK IF US COULD GIVE LIBERIA SOME PACKAGED DISASTER HOSPITALS AND BACKUP MEDICAL SUPPLIES ON GRANT BASIS FOR ITS HEALTH OUTREACH PROGRAM.

C. HOUSING GUARANTY PROGRAM-- MINISTER NEAL MENTIONED THAT USAID HAD COMPLETED ITS FINAL FEASIBILITY SURVEY FOR PROPOSED \$5 MILLION FOR LOW COST HOUSING PROJECT IN LIBERIA. IN ADDITION, HE NOTED GOL HAD MET ALL OF AID'S REQUIREMENTS AND HAD FORWARDED APPLICATION TO USAID. MINISTER NEAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASKED IF IT WAS POSSIBLE TO HAVE PROPOSED LOAN AUTHORIZED AT TIME OF PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S VISIT AND ANNOUNCED DURING COURSE OF VISIT.

D. TELECOMMUNICATIONS LOAN-- MINISTER NEAL STATED THAT USAID AND GOL HAD BEEN DISCUSSING LOAN OF \$8 MILLION FOR PROPOSED EXPANSION AND REHABILITATION OF LIBERIA'S

TLECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM. MINISTER NEAL NOTED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE NEARING COMPLETION AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THIS LOAN COULD BE AUTHORIZED AND SIGNED DURING PRESIDENT TOBLERT' S VISIT.

E. PL-480 TITLE I PROGRAM FOR FY 74-- MINISTER NEAL REGISTERED HIS GOVERNMENT' S DISAPPOINTMENT AT NOT RECEIVING

PL-480 TITLE I PROGRAM IN FY 73. HE FURTHER NOTED THAT GOL HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY INFORMED OF SLIGHT CHANCES OF GETTING A PL 480 PROGRAM IN FY 74. MINISTER NEAL STATED PRESIDENT TOLBERT WOULD BE SEEKING ASSURANCES THAT LIBERIA WOULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY CONSIDERATION FOR A PL 480 OF APPROXIMATELY \$1.5 MILLION TO \$2.0 MILLION IN FY 74.

F. RURAL INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT-- MINISTER NEAL MENTIONED THAT IBRD WAS CARRYING OUT A SERIES OF FEASIBILITY STUDIES IN UPPER LOFA COUNTY AND BONG COUNTIES. IN ADDITION, HE NOTED UNIDO WAS PREPARING TO DO AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY FEASIBILITY STUDIES IN NIMBA AND GRAND GEDEH COUNTIES. MINISTER NEAL STATED PRESIDENT TOLBERT WOULD BE EXPLORING US GOVERNMENT' S RECEPTIVITY FOR FINANCING SOME OF PROPOSED PROJECTS THAT MIGHT RESULT FROM THESE FEASIBILITY STUDIES.

3. COMMENT

WE BELIEVE MINISTER NEAL AND GOL ARE MAKING CONSCIENTIOUS EFFORT TO AVOID BROAD SHOPPING LIST APPROACH FOR ADDITIONAL U. S. ASSISTANCE TO LIBERIA. (HOWEVER, ABOVE SHOULD ALSO BE READ IN LIGHT MONROVIA 2339 IN WHICH FOREIGN MINISTER WEEKS EMPHASIZES GOL LOOKING TO SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN LEVELS (I. E. TOTAL AMOUNT) OF US AID.) WE FURTHER BELIEVE TOPICS CITED BY NEAL REPRESENT IMPORTANT SUBJECTS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FROM US AND GOL POINT OF VIEW. WITH EXCEPTION OF MONROVIA PORT LOAN ITEM (WHICH INFORMALLY DISCUSSED IN AF/ W BY DCM GAMON IN APRIL), THEY ALL HAVE BEEN UNDER CONSIDERATION BY USAID/ L AND GOL. RE PL-480 SUGGESTION, IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT BEFORE PL-480 REQUEST

CAN BE TRANSLATED INTO USEFUL ACTION, GOL MUST PROVIDE CLEARER INDICATION OF COMMODITIES DESIRED AND PROGRAMMING FOR COUNTERPART USE. WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING DEPARTMENT' S AND AID' S REACTIONS TO ABOVE TOPICS AND ANY INDICATIONS OF HOW USG MIGHT BE RESPONSIVE TO PRESIDENT TOLBERT' S PROPOSED REQUESTS.

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